

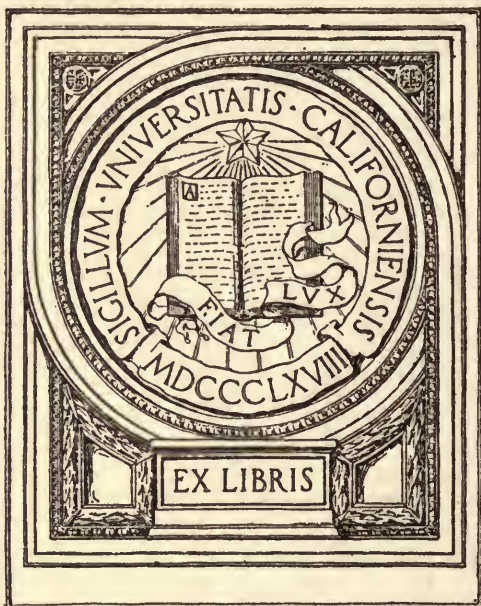
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DATA  
OF  
Mexican and United States History

BY  
BERNARD MOSES.

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1887.





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# Mexican and United States History

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## DATA OF MEXICAN AND UNITED STATES HISTORY.

The recent rapid settlement of the southwestern States and Territories of the United States, and the extension of facilities of communication into Mexico have entirely changed the relations between these two republics, and greatly enlarged the interest of each in the other. A nation hitherto isolated and unprogressive is by these means being brought into the community of progressive nations, and it is not to be supposed that the lethargy of the past three hundred years is to be continued. The relations between the United States and Mexico in the immediate future will necessarily be either those of friendly co-operation or of positive hostility. In either case it is desirable that each should possess a better understanding than at present of the actual character of the other. In the affairs of every nation there are certain general facts which help directly to reveal this character, and it is some of these bearing on the Mexican nation which it is proposed here to set forth in contrast with facts of the same class drawn from the history and present condition of the United States. They refer to the peculiar conditions under which a nation's social and political institutions are developed. They embrace the climatic and geographical conditions of the nation, its descent, the source of its national life, the impulse which it has received from the mother country, the relation of the immigrant to the aboriginal population, the rate of increase of the whole, and the circumstances in which its political energy, at different times, has found expression. These facts it will be necessary to take into account in studying the data requisite for an understanding of the history of Mexico and of the United States; and also certain phases of the

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ecclesiastical institutions and their political influence, the attitude of the people towards revolutionary methods, and the relative position of the economic affairs of the two nations. These facts constitute the subject-matter of the prologue of a nation's history. They do not, however, enter into the political development of all nations with the same relative degree of modifying force.

The differences between the institutions of different nations may, in certain cases, be due chiefly to unlike climatic and geographical conditions, while the differences observed in other cases may be almost entirely attributable to different race characteristics, in other words, to the different origins of the several nations, and a consequent difference of inherited traits. The contrast between the political characteristics of France and Germany, for instance, is to be attributed only in a very slight degree to geographical contrasts, but in a very large measure to the inherited peculiarities of the inhabitants. But the differences between England and Germany, or between England and France, have been produced to a much greater extent by the force of different geographical conditions. Although at different epochs of English history political liberty has been temporarily suppressed, still the eclipse has been only partial and of comparatively short duration. But in other countries, as Spain, France, Germany, with apparently favorable beginnings, the people early lost a large share of their ancient liberties. The superiority of England's good fortune in this regard, is largely due to the geographical fact that it is an island. The people from the Continent who settled England, brought with them no political wisdom greater than that which they left behind with their kindred. In their new home, however, they found conditions favorable to independent growth. Their circumstances here favored the development of that political wisdom which they had in common with the whole Germanic people, and enabled the nation to realize this wisdom in free institutions.

In the formation of the institutions of the United States, it is possible also to trace the influence of geographical position.

The long stretch of coast facing Europe, furthered the establishment of a series of settlements independent of one another and only subordinated to a distant power. The considerable independence which the several colonies thus acquired exerted a powerful influence to make the national government a federal government; for they had so long pursued a separate and individual existence that no closer union was immediately possible. The two alternatives which the makers of the Constitution had to face were federation and anarchy. Moreover, the general position of the territory of the United States has made it the goal of the bulk of European emigration. The vast and fertile regions cultivated by men whom a stimulating climate urges to vigorous action, have given the nation unsurpassed wealth. The ease of obtaining a suitable return for labor from the unlimited sources of wealth-production, has prevented any considerable class from falling into poverty, and thus made the problem of republican government hitherto of easy solution. But the most abundant sources were not revealed till the population had been disciplined through several generations under the hard conditions of New England and the Middle Atlantic States. Necessity made the inhabitants of the colonies thrifty, and so thoroughly were they taught the lesson that when the necessity was past the habits of thrift and economy remained to leaven the whole nation. From the point of view of its physical characteristics, the United States presents a marked contrast with the neighboring republic on the south.

The striking physical feature of Mexico is the fact that a large part of the most densely populated territory, although within the tropics, lies at an elevation which gives it a climate removed from the extremes of heat and cold, and admirably suited to a life of indolence and ease. Of the present population of Mexico, which is not far from ten and a half millions, about one-half live at an elevation of over six thousand feet. Above this line are found six of the nine cities which contain more than thirty thousand inhabitants each; while of the seven cities ranging in population from twenty thou-



sand to thirty thousand, all but Colima and Vera Cruz lie more than five thousand feet above the sea. The preponderance of the highland population may be clearly seen, moreover, by a comparison of the areas and numbers of inhabitants of the several groups into which the twenty-seven States, the Federal District, and the territory of Lower California may be gathered. The northern States, including Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nevo Leon and Lower California, embrace an area of 310,162 square miles and a population of 745,699; the eastern States,—Tamaulipas, Vera Cruz, Tobasco, Campeche and Yucatan,—an area of 112,478 square miles, with a population of 1,220,053; the Pacific States—Sinaloa, Jalisco, Colima, Michoacan, Guerrero, Oaxaca and, Chipas—an area of 182,292 square miles, with a population of 3,398,607; while the central States, as Durango, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, San Louis, Guanajuato, Querétaro, Hidalgo, Mexico, Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and the Federal District, with a total area of only 145,530 square miles, have a population of 5,083,625.<sup>1</sup> Thus this group of small States on the high central table-land, with an area less by 20,000 square miles than that of the two States of Sonora and Chihuahua, in other words, with less than one-fifth of the territory of the Republic, contains about one-half of the population.

It is not to be supposed that this table-land is simply a level plain. It is rather a region of uneven surface, elevated from 6,000 to 9,000 feet above the sea, and is made up of a succession of broad valleys of different elevations, separated by vast tracts of high rolling country, broken here and there by lofty ridges and volcanic peaks. This is known as the cold region, and enjoys a mean temperature of from 51° to 55° Fahrenheit.

Descending to the valleys which, with their surrounding hills, make up the region sloping from the borders of the central table-land to the ocean and the gulf, we pass through a zone of beautiful and luxuriant vegetation, where "reigns

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<sup>1</sup> Garcia Cubas, "Cuadro Geográfico," pp. 10-11.

perpetually a soft spring temperature." Below this land of eternal spring lie the hot regions of the coast. While the vegetation of the highlands is feeble the lower zones are admirably suited, both by soil and climate, for the most abundant production. Yet the highlands, under Aztec as well as under Spanish dominion, have been the principal seat of Mexican civilization. Following the general plan of popular migrations, by which the migrating members of any tribe or nation seek for their new home a climate not greatly unlike that of their abandoned country, "the Aztecs, originally from a country to the north of the Rio Gila, perhaps even emigrants from the most northern parts of Asia, in their progress towards the south, never quitted the ridge of the Cordillera, preferring these cold regions to the excessive heat of the coast."<sup>1</sup> After the conquest, it became necessary for the Spaniards to assert their power at the points from which had previously issued the governmental authority of the defeated nation. Political policy, therefore, led the conquerors to establish themselves in those parts of the country which they found most densely populated. Ecclesiastical policy contributed to the same result. It suggested the erection of a Christian altar in every place specially consecrated to pagan worship; and thus under the old régime of Spanish dominion in Mexico, the bulk of the European population was gathered at the centres of ancient Aztec civilization. The occupancy of the highlands by the Spaniards was, moreover, determined by their inordinate desire for the precious metals which found here its most immediate gratification.

Thus, the elevation of the table-land into the region of a temperate climate, made it the home of the Aztecs who had emigrated from a northern zone; and the presence of the Aztecs determined here the later civilization introduced by the Spaniards. The forces which have concentrated within this comparatively small area the bulk of the population of the nation, and more particularly the bulk of the dominant

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<sup>1</sup> Humboldt, "Political Essay," 1.90.

class, have been, moreover, specially powerful in making the government of Mexico a centralized government, in spite of the existence of elaborate laws providing for a federal distribution of power.

With this brief reference to the fact that climatic and geographical conditions are to be set down among the data of the nation's political life, we may turn to the more important item of popular descent. The fundamental notion here is the principle of heredity, a notion that is as old as civilization, and has been recognized in the organization of society from the beginning until now. We may not be disposed to accept the idea with all the consequences that have been assigned to it, yet there are undeniably certain characteristics which pass by inheritance from generation to generation. These may be the mental or physical peculiarities of the family, or the more general characteristics or qualities by which one race is distinguished from another. There is no doubt, however, that the persistence of a national or race character may be explained, to a certain extent, by the fact of imitation, but, at the same time, there survives, by inheritance, in the nation as well as in the individual man, somewhat that can be accounted for neither on the ground of imitation nor on the ground of previous instruction. There exists an inherited bias, aptitude, or propensity, which makes certain ideas acceptable and others repugnant, and will, therefore, be likely to insure the adoption of the one and the rejection of the other.

The fundamental similarity of the governments of all nations of one race can be reasonably explained only on the basis of a common inheritance of primitive political traditions, and of a common inherited political bias. All the modern Aryan nations have governments organized on a common fundamental plan, and we find on examination that this plan embodies the essential features of the original government, so far as we know it, of the primitive stock from which these nations are descended. This similarity may be explained as an inheritance by tradition, or as an inherited



habit of mind which leads it to seek instinctively to reproduce this primitive form of organization. The primitive threefold division of authority among king, council, and assembly is essentially reproduced in every nation of Aryan descent. If, in some nations at some periods of their history, important variations from the essential type of the primitive governments have been manifest, these variations must be attributed to local and temporary causes. A prominent cause of the interruption of the normal growth of governments may be found in the church, which has often demanded participation in the government through a separate deliberative assembly. In other cases, peculiar circumstances have led to such a degree of individual development of classes as to make the union of any two in a single assembly entirely out of the question, as in Sweden, where the legislature was composed of four distinct houses. But here, as in all cases, political progress has tended to break down that abnormal growth, and bring the organization back to its primitive plan.

This tendency may be attributed to what has been termed the political instinct of the race, a force of conservatism which is always present in every nation, but which is sometimes overcome and obscured by a temporarily dominant radicalism. The abolition of the Crown and House of Lords in the time of Charles I. was the work of radicalism, but the gradual return of the Government, during the period of the Commonwealth, to its ancient forms, indicates the influence of an abiding conservatism. The radicalism of France in nearly every revolutionary undertaking has declared for a single legislative assembly, but the conservative spirit has, in each case, ultimately triumphed. These two forces, the political instinct of the race, or conservatism, on the one hand, and intelligence or radicalism, on the other, must be given prominence in any thorough consideration of the political life of a nation.

But even greater prominence in this regard must be assigned to that course of historical events which specially concern that nation whose politics it is proposed to explain.

Moreover, if there is an historical record of the origin of the nation in question from some older nation, as of the United States from England, or of modern Mexico from Spain, it will be necessary also to take account of the political status of the antecedent nation at the time of the separation. No ideas of governmental organization are so familiar to colonists as those which they have seen realized in the mother country, and for this and other reasons the government of the colony is almost universally a more or less accurate copy of the home government. The spirit at least is transmitted, and whatever variation in form appears is due to the peculiar circumstances of the new settlement. The colonies of Spain and England stand in sharp contrast in this regard. A Spanish colony, whether viewed with reference to its organization or to its influence, is widely different from an English colony. The difference is not merely casual; it is fundamental. With certain variations, it is the distinction which existed between the colonization policies of the Greeks and the Romans. The Greek settlements, made up of the voluntary overflow of the population of the mother country, were generally independent from the start. "The migrations of the colonists were commonly undertaken with the approbation and encouragement of the states from which they issued; and it frequently happened that the motive of the expedition was one in which the interest of the mother country was mainly concerned: as when the object was to relieve it of superfluous hands or of discontented and turbulent spirits. But it was seldom that the parent state looked forward to any more remote advantage from the colony, or that the colony expected or desired any from the parent state. There was in most cases nothing to suggest the feeling of dependence on the one side, or a claim of authority on the other. The sons when they left their homes to shift for themselves on a foreign shore, carried with them only the blessing of their fathers, and felt themselves completely emancipated from their control. Often the colony became more powerful than its parent, and the distance between them was generally so great as to preclude all

attempts to enforce submission."<sup>1</sup> The only bond between them was a moral sentiment growing out of the fact of a common origin.

The Roman colonies on the other hand, formed a part of an elaborate scheme for extending Roman dominion. They were the creatures of the central power and the main instruments for confirming its conquests. "The Grecian colonies were not intended to increase the power of the parent state by enlarging its dominions, and they were usually established in some unoccupied or partially occupied territory." But the Roman colonies were generally "established in existing towns, the citizens of which were ejected and deprived of their lands.... Instead of being independent of the parent state, they were strictly dependent on it, and the political rights of the colonists were very limited. In fact, the Roman colonies were in their origin little more than garrisons in conquered fortified places, where land was allotted to the soldiers instead of pay and provisions."<sup>2</sup> In the methods of their establishment, the Grecian colonies were like the colonies of modern England. The colonies of Spain, like the Roman colonies, were creations of the central political organization, and were upheld and controlled by a power outside of themselves. Most English colonial dependencies have worked their way to prominence through a struggling age of feebleness. The Spanish dependencies, on the other hand, have been from the outset equipped with ample legal machinery, and been controlled and supported by the sagacity and power of the monarch. "The fundamental maxim of Spanish jurisprudence with respect to America," says Robertson, "is to consider what has been acquired there as vested in the crown, rather than in the state. By the bull of Alexander VI., on which, as its great charter, Spain founded its right, all the regions that had been or should be discovered were bestowed as a free gift upon Ferdinand and Isabella. They and their successors were uniformly held to be the universal proprietors

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, "Government of Dependencies," 107.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, "Government of Dependencies," 116.

of the vast territories which the arms of their subjects conquered in the new world. From them all grants of lands there flowed, and to them they finally returned. The leaders who conducted the various expeditions, the governors who presided over the different colonies, the officers of justice, and the ministers of religion, were all appointed by their authority, and removable at their pleasure. The people who composed infant settlements were entitled to no privileges independent of the sovereign, or that served as a barrier against the power of the crown."<sup>1</sup> The power that was exercised by the elected magistrates in the towns, was merely municipal and was confined to the regulation of their own interior commerce and police. All political power "centered in the crown, and in the officers of its nomination."

For the purpose of exercising this vast power with which the Spanish Crown was clothed, the Spanish dependencies of America were divided into two governments, each under a Viceroy, that of Mexico and that of Peru. The former embraced all the possessions of Spain in North America, and the latter those of South America. The Viceroy, like the monarch whom he represented, exercised a power that was practically absolute within the limits of his government. His authority extended to every department of the administration, and his external pomp was suited to his authority.

But the independent feebleness of the English settlement was more conducive to healthy social growth than the rigid and powerful rule of the Mexican Viceroy. The knowledge of the Viceroy's power and of his uncompromising jealousy of any interference in affairs falling within the sphere of his prerogative paralyzed all efforts of local self-help; and yet, by reason of the multiplicity of his duties and the vastness of his dominions and the indifference of his subordinates, he could render no efficient force to stimulate social action, and stagnation, therefore, necessarily ensued.

But however unlike the English and Spanish dependencies,

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<sup>1</sup> "History of America," p. 351.



with respect to their social and political organization, there were certain fundamental motives to their establishment which were the same for both. Conspicuous among these was the primary notion on which the mercantile system of economics was constructed, the notion that the precious metals were alone wealth, and that that nation which had the largest quantity of these must be regarded the most wealthy. On this idea was based the colonial policy of modern European states. Spain sought the desired end directly; England, under the influence of the East India Company, advanced toward it in a somewhat more roundabout way. Mexico and Peru furnished these metals directly from their mines, and for this reason were regarded by Spain as the most desirable possessions conceivable. No effort was spared that might be necessary to conquer and hold them. They contained in abundance what all nations looked upon as the basis of material salvation.

While Spain sought gold directly and legislated to prevent its exportation, England advanced one step further towards the light, and was willing under certain circumstances to allow it to leave the country. But the ulterior aim of the English was the same as that of the Spaniards. Gold and silver might leave England for the purchase of raw material, since the raw material when elaborated into commodities would be more valuable than in its primitive condition, and might in its new form be exported for a return of the precious metals larger than that which had been allowed originally to leave the kingdom. Under this view it became necessary to have a market for manufactured commodities; hence the idea of colonies under sufficient control to be kept from all kinds of production but that of raw material, in order, in the first place, that such raw material might be cheap, and, in the second place, that there might be a demand for the industrial products of the mother country. Thus the blessed thirst for gold was a common motive in both the English and Spanish struggles for foreign dependencies.

Although the fundamental idea of the mercantile system was long since discredited, many of its practical consequences

survive in modern legislation. The hostility to importation, which marks the commercial policy of many existing states, is a practical survival of an exploded economic theory. England's support of the Southern States of the Union in the civil war was suggested by the surviving ideas of her colonial policy. The South, an abundant producer of raw material, without manufactures, and with a considerable demand for manufactured commodities, was such a colony as the European nations sought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To draw these States into a close alliance with England was one of the aims of the English, and they were not careful about the means. Moreover, since the German Empire has turned back towards mediævalism in her economic affairs, since she has accepted the practical doctrines of that theory which was the basis of the early English and Spanish colonial policies, she has been scouring the world for some unoccupied territory which may serve as the beginning place of a colonial foundation. Unlike the Spanish and the English, the Germans have shown themselves willing, on emigrating, to be absorbed by other, nations and consequently practically unfit for the work of establishing independent commercial outposts for the mother country.

From another point of view the English and Spanish policies with reference to colonial dependencies have been somewhat wide apart. While Spain was sending Christian missionaries to extend the kingdom of heaven on earth, England was making her colonies a place of banishment for her convicts. There is no doubt that one of the motives of Spain's action was a genuine and honest desire for the spiritual regeneration of the native population, and that this desire was felt by many of those who sought to make themselves the instruments of this regeneration. But at the same time ecclesiastics, when they constitute the predominating element, do not furnish a hopeful basis for a new social organism. It may be said that under the priests in the Spanish settlements in America the natives learned the arts of peace and were well started on the way towards civilized life. Yet in almost

every instance, if not in every instance, the priestly method of building up a society has had to undergo a revolution before any real progress could become possible. For an illustration of this process we have not to look beyond the history of California. The missions of California when they were secularized had gone about as far as it was possible to go on that line towards civilization. A few thousand natives had been reduced to a slave-like submission, and a few thousand cattle had been scattered over the hills and along the valleys, and at this point social progress had stopped. Further advance towards the cultivation of civilized life required the substitution of an entirely new basis of social order. Before we could build a new and nobler structure, the old structure had to be broken down and a new foundation laid.

But the most significant contrast between Spanish and English dependencies appears with reference to the extent of power exercised in matters of local control. In other words, it is a contrast in means of political education. Under the rigid rule of the Council of the Indies and of its subordinates, provided for carrying out the decrees of the Spanish Government, the great body of the people learned only one lesson, and that was the lesson of obedience. The power of self-determination they had no opportunities for acquiring. They only learned to follow, not because they saw any reason for going in one direction rather than in another, but because they were dominated by a superstition born of inexperience in matters of public concern. The result of this was to make possible quiet and orderly conduct as long as the power of the parent state remained unshaken; but it did not prepare the way for independent national conduct. When, therefore, the tie of allegiance to Spain was severed, the communities were like a ship without a rudder or ballast. There were no points of advantage that could be used to give them consistent movement in any direction. They were subject to the shifting currents of uninstructed prejudice. While the bulk of the people were willing to render obedience, they were without the means of determining to whom it should be rendered.

They were perfect material for the demagogue, that is to say, they were the pliant tools of revolutionists. The Spanish-American attempts at self-government have, therefore, in most cases had a sorry outcome; not because of any original incapacity in the stock, but because of the lamentable political education which the dependencies received during their three centuries of bondage to Spain, an education, the evil tendencies of which it will require yet several generations completely to counteract. It is natural to cast the blame for the political shortcomings of Mexico and the South American republics on the republican scheme of government. The wonder the rather is that the republican system has been able to find here any tolerable application. Most of the evils which are charged against republicanism as a system of government, whether in the former Spanish dependencies of America, or in the now independent English settlements, cannot with justice be ascribed to democracy, but are rather attributable to the unfortunate political antecedents of those who are attempting to live by the democratic rule. The sins of the fathers are being visited on the children. This previous education under monarchy is one of the chief sources of embarrassment to republican government. But on the other hand, colonies in pursuit of republican liberty derive an incalculable advantage from their antecedents, when they are derived from a nation in which the spirit of liberty was active at the time of separation. The zeal for political freedom which was manifest in a large part of the English nation, in the seventeenth century, and the ample provisions for self-government which had already been carried out by the English people, are points not to be overlooked in considering the political affairs of the United States; nor, in seeking a rational explanation of the establishment and long continuance of absolutism in Mexico, are we to forget that Spanish colonization of that country took place at a time when the ancient popular liberty of Spain had been suppressed, and the nation subjected to the despotic rule of the crown. The contrast between the origin of Mexico and that of the United



States goes a long way towards explaining the difference between their later courses of political development. The settlers of the United States came from a nation which had resisted the encroachments of the crown; the settlers of Mexico were the creatures of the crown, and from a country where the national parliament had already lost its power and the government been removed from popular control. The people of the United States, at the beginning of their colonial history, occupied a more advanced position, politically, than any other part of the world's population. The Spanish settlers of Mexico were, politically, representatives of a retrograde movement. Spain, then, gave to Mexico an inheritance of absolutism, while England gave to the United States a solid basis of free institutions and an unconquerable spirit of liberty. The traditions which Mexico derived from the mother country were largely the traditions of despotism, and any permanent advance towards liberty had to be made in opposition to these traditions. In the United States, however, the people were, in a certain sense, forced into liberty by the power of their political traditions.

The contrast which is here presented from another point of view is also important. The United States were settled by a people who, throughout a most remarkable career of conquest and colonization, have never truckled to the savage, nor for the sake of influence over inferior races, been willing to give up their purity of blood. Since the days of migration from the low lands of Sleswick, the English people, in England, in America, in Australia, have moved steadily and irresistibly forward, and their advance has been marked by the disappearance of the uncultivated aborigines. The English in colonizing have been uncompromizing. To the barbarians whose territory they have overrun, they have held out two simple alternatives, either to accept the English standard of civilization, or to fold their tents and depart. The Spaniards, on the other hand, and the French as well, have carried out an entirely different policy. Wherever they have met the native tribes of America, they have been willing to descend from their European standard of

civilization and affiliate with them on a lower plane. In Mexico, the Spaniards have mingled their blood with the blood of the natives, and have brought them into the church through a compromise between Christianity and Paganism. The English policy tends to exterminate the barbarians, while, under Spanish dominion, they form a constituent part of the new nation. From the stand-point of the individuals or the tribes of the native population, the English policy appears merciless and unwarrantably cruel ; but from the stand-point of the method of social progress, "so careless of the single life" if only the great end is reached, it may find abundant justification.

Although the English have been more exacting in their social demands on the people of their dependencies than the Spanish, although they have insisted rigidly on the maintenance of the English standard of civilization, they have at the same time held their dependencies, particularly since the fatal mistake with the thirteen American colonies, in a much more lenient bondage than the other European nations. In the case of the Spanish dependency, the bonds binding it to the mother country have been rigid and unelastic, so that they have parted with the first considerable strain, and the colony has been irretrievably severed from its superior. The English dependencies, on the other hand, have found themselves at the end of an elastic tie. When they have tugged to be free, the cord has yielded, but has gradually drawn them back when their discontent was past. Australia and Canada may adopt a commercial policy directly at variance with the views of England, and still the bond of union remains unbroken. But Spain has insisted on an essential uniformity of policy throughout her vast dominions ; in other words, obedience to that policy which would contribute most to the selfish interests of the mother country. Trifling disagreements have, therefore, led to strained relations between them, and ultimately to the independence of the colonies. An illustration of this may be found not only in Mexico, but also in the Netherlands. Here the people had a few little eccentricities which

were not in keeping with the designs of the Spaniards. One was the disposition to use the results of their thrift for their own advantage, and not to allow them to be appropriated for a useless extension of their clerical force. In view of such independence the Spaniard was filled with fiery indignation. To his mind a ruined province with obedience appeared better than a rich province filled with the spirit of independence. The outcome of rigid adherence to such doctrines was the loss by the Spanish of their most abundant sources of wealth.

While the Spanish political policy has tended to drive her colonies into revolt and independence, her social policy, as already suggested, has tended to preserve the original stock and mingle its blood with the blood of the immigrant population; yet at the end of any considerable period, the increase in the English colony, under conditions equally favorable with those of a given Spanish colony, will be found to have far outrun the increase of the combined Spanish and native populations. At least this appears from a comparison of Mexico and the United States. The English policy is, therefore, consistent with that view which sees in social progress the pursuit of grand ultimate results rather than inferior immediate results, although the latter may be more in harmony with our short-sighted sympathies. The accounts of the number of the inhabitants of Mexico are simple more or less accurate estimates, yet they are sufficiently accurate to indicate in a general way the growth of the Mexican population, which appears, when compared with the growth of the population in the United States, to have been exceedingly slow.

Taking dates of enumeration in the two countries as near together as possible, we find that in 1793, Mexico had a population of 4,483,529, while the population of the United States in 1790 was 3,929,214. About twenty years latter, in 1808, Mexico had 6,500,000, and the United States, in 1810, 7,239,881. For Mexico's next enumeration we are obliged to pass over a period of thirty years, to 1838, at which time the population is set down at 7,044,140, but in 1840, the population of the United States had become 17,069,453. The next

comparison may be made in 1856 for Mexico, and in 1860 for the United States, when the former had 7,859,564, and the later, 31,443,321. In 1872, Mexico had 9,097,056 inhabitants, and the United States, in 1870, 38,558,371. Ten years later, in 1883, Mexico's population had increased to 10,500,000, while that of the United States was nearly five times as great, amounting in 1880, to 50,155,783. These data put in a tabular form reveal more clearly the striking contrast in the increase of population in the two countries.

MEXICO.	UNITED STATES.
1793.....4,483,529	1790 .....3,929,214
1808.....6,500,000	1810.....7,239,881
1838.....7,044,140	1840.....17,069,453
1856.....7,859,564	1860.....31,443,321
1872.....9,097,056	1870.....38,558,371
1883.....10,500,000	1880.....50,155,783

The difference in assimilating power which has been indicated as existing between the English and Spanish peoples, has important consequences. The United States, originating chiefly in English colonization, manifests, in spite of considerable additions from other peoples, a strong tendency to become homogeneous, while modern Mexico, having its origin in the union of Spanish colonists and the aborigines, continues to be characterized by class distinctions, no one element being powerful enough to assimilate the rest. The effect of this is to render the practical political problems more complex and difficult in the latter nation than in the former.

Facts like these regarding the migration and colonization of the English and Spanish peoples, taken in connection with the statistics of the growth of population in Mexico and the United States, are data of great importance in elucidating the political problems which the two nations present. These data



furnish, moreover, a certain basis for speculations touching the probable future of these two nations. In the last ninety years the population of Mexico has increased from four and a half millions to ten and a half millions. The population of the United States, in the same time, has increased from four millions to fifty millions. The same rate of increase in each, continued during the next ninety years, will give Mexico a population of twenty-four and a half millions, and the United States six hundred and twenty-five millions. Yet, in spite of this enormous increase in the United States, during the last ninety years, the inhabitants have continued to be better fed and clothed than in Mexico, and there are no indications that a lack of subsistence during the next period will furnish a more efficient check on the growth of population in the larger than in the smaller nation. But to suppose that this vast population will keep strictly within the present limits, is to suppose that the English people, after centuries of expansion, will here, on the shores of the Pacific, suddenly give up its ancient habits and lay aside its most vital and characteristic tendency. These facts rather make it probable that the stream of English migration, finding a limit set to its western movement, will be turned towards the south, and seek at least a temporary outlet into the temperate regions of the Mexican table-lands, where the exceptional business sagacity of the people of English stock will easily obtain industrial and commercial dominion over a population of inferior business capacity, and of a childish improvidence. The position and influence of the ecclesiastical institutions of the two nations also furnish data essential to an understanding of the affairs of these nations. In these matters, the United States appears, from a political point of view, to have been the more fortunate. The contrast presented here is between the principle and practice of toleration, on the one hand, and intolerance and the inquisition, on the other. In one nation, religion tended to become a private matter ; in the other it was, and tended to remain, an affair of the state. In some of the settlements of the United States, the ecclesiastical and political

organizations were at first merged in one, but the tendency to separate them appeared early and continued until the divorce was complete. But in Mexico, the alliance continued unbroken for more than three hundred years, the church constantly gaining wealth, power, and compactness of organization. From one end of the realm to the other, there were no affairs of memorable importance but those in which the church was more or less directly concerned. It held one-half of all the property of the country, and was directed by men whose very calling placed them out of sympathy with those interests on which the prosperity of society depends. On the economic affairs of Mexico, as on those of Spain, the church laid the curse of its dead hand. Against this powerful organization, wielding immense wealth, and armed with the spiritual thunderbolts of Divine wrath, has had to be waged the struggle for free, secular government in Mexico.

The fact that the settlers of the United States were dissenters, bound to no strong hierarchical organization, was significant, in that it rendered easy the complete separation of the colonies from England. The Spaniards, on the other hand, who introduced European civilization into Mexico, were adherents of the Roman Church, and thus the Church of Mexico and the Church of Spain became allied as parts of one great organism. When, therefore, the struggle for Mexican independence came, it was found that it was not enough to break the political bond ; the bond of ecclesiastical union and sympathy remained, always drawing a large part of the new nation back to its allegiance to Spain. The Tories of the thirteen colonies disappeared soon after the Revolutionary period ; they either accepted gracefully the fact of independence, or wandered off to seek more congenial companionship. But the upholders of Spanish rule in Mexico, during the war for Mexican independence, remained, when the war was over a powerful and dissatisfied element in the national politics. The thirteen colonies had achieved intellectual and spiritual independence long before the war for political independence began. But even after the Mexicans had achieved their poli-

tical independence, they remained still in ecclesiastical and intellectual bondage to the mother country.

The strength of this conservative element, or of the element of the Mexican population that has been dissatisfied with independence, has been one of the main causes of the numerous revolutions which have afflicted this unhappy country. These revolutions, moreover, by giving to the inhabitants an unstable character, by preventing them from learning that there is any other way to settle a national issue in politics than by force of arms, have unquestionably made an impression on the mind of the nation which cannot be overlooked in explaining its political institutions and practice. Bad conduct may give a nation, as well as an individual man, bad habits, and these habits in both cases become factors in determining the life. A nation that lives through two or three revolutions in a generation becomes familiarized with the idea of effecting results by this means, and has constantly to be dealt with as if at the first appearance of dissatisfaction it might fly into revolt. Mexico is not the only country where factions have stood ready, at any unfavorable turn of affairs, to take power into their own hands. France has been more or less afflicted in this way. But the English people, in England and the United States, have never shown great sympathy with revolutionary methods. They have generally manifested a firm adherence to legal means for accomplishing public ends. Their allegiance is to impersonal law. But in the Continental nations, in whose governments the monarchial element has played a more conspicuous rôle, the allegiance of the subjects partakes of the character of personal devotion to the king or emperor. It is not strange, therefore, that the Mexicans, after their long tutelage under absolutism, should find it somewhat difficult to guide their actual conduct by a rule which they cannot attribute to any personal protector. In this regard they present a more or less significant contrast with the people of the United States.

Of the other phases of national life, which might be examined and set as a back-ground for the presentation of the

politics of Mexico, it must suffice, after what has already been said, to refer simply to the economic affairs of the nation, and to the fact of the presence in it of large unassimilated elements of population. No adequate understanding of the institutions and political life of the United States can be attained without taking into account the nation's abundant wealth, the predominance of the industrial and commercial spirit, and the irresistible tendency of the inhabitants to combine for the conduct of business. Nor can we properly understand the institutions and political life of Mexico without taking into account the poverty of the great bulk of the people, the insignificant development of the practical business sense, and the almost entire want of the spirit of industrial association. These facts indicate national qualities that are influential in determining not only the political law, but also the political customs and usages of the nation; that is to say, it will be found that two nations differing so widely from one another in these respects as Mexico and the United States, will not have parallel courses of legal development, and even if they start with similar laws, the conventions of the constitutions, consisting of customs, practices, maxims or precepts which are not enforced or recognized by the courts,<sup>1</sup> will necessarily be different.

The law of Mexico, for example, provides for universal suffrage, but the bulk of the population do not enjoy the privilege which the law accords. They are ignorant, and they are overwhelmed in that indolent poverty which prevails in the tropics. They are nominally free, but their ignorance, their poverty, and the prejudice under which they live prevent them from exercising political rights. Although not carried out, the law stands unrepealed. It is, however, practically modified by conventional rules which no one thinks of disregarding. When a conventional rule which controverts a written law, has arisen and become established, it is in keeping with the order of legal growth, and therefore to be ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Dicey, "The Law of the Constitution," 341.



pected that sooner or later the law will be modified and brought into conformity with the custom. From this point of view may be clearly seen the importance of economic conditions and of all peculiar conditions which are powerful in modifying national customs, and which by shaping the customs ultimately determine the laws and political institutions of the nation. The economic affairs of Mexico present a striking contrast to those of the United States, and very different influences are thereby brought to bear upon the political development of the two countries. This economic difference is, to a very great extent, the result of the different fundamental ideas on which the two societies were organized. To express this difference in a word, Mexican society was organized, and, throughout the greater part of its history continued to rest, on an ecclesiastical basis, while the society of the United States was formed on an economical basis, or on a basis of industry and commerce. Under the Mexican organization the gains of society were, in a very large measure, turned to economically unproductive uses. The erection and maintenance of numberless costly churches and monasteries, however desirable may have been the spiritual results, absorbed millions which not only added nothing to the productive forces of the nation, but remained, as long as they were devoted to their original purpose, an important item of expense. Had the millions, or any considerable part of them, which early in the history of Mexico went into its ecclesiastical foundations, been so invested as to have brought the ordinary returns of capital, Mexico would have become one of the richest nations in the world, instead of being, as it is at present, on the verge of national bankruptcy. From an economical point of view, it appears as one of the elements of the good fortune of the United States, that the people, in the early part of their history, were satisfied with the plain wooden meeting house, and at the same time were moved to put their surplus gains where they would constitute a productive force, and where, by their own annual increase, they would add to the aggregate wealth of society.

But the church is only one of the forces that have operated to determine the relative economic position of these two nations. To this must be added the climate and the characteristics of the several classes of the inhabitants. The rapid advancement made by the people of the northern part of the United States in the development of means for facilitating agricultural and industrial production is due in a very large degree to the fact that labor here has never been under the ban of a social prejudice, as in Mexico and the Southern States of the Union. Wherever slave labor, or the labor of a despised class, exists, there is far less incentive to improve the instruments of production than under circumstances where laborers are free and labor is held in esteem. Mexico and the Southern States of the Union present, to some extent, a parallel in this regard. The position of the negro of the South is not altogether unlike that of the Indian of Mexico. Each bears the burden of the bulk of the ordinary labor of his community, and against both there rests a strong social prejudice. Each belongs to a rude element in the population, which affords little stimulus to economic progress, and the presence of which helps to account for the backwardness of the economic affairs of Mexico and the Southern States as compared with the northern half of the Union, where the labor has been performed by persons of a higher grade of intelligence and of superior independence.

The political problem presented by the presence of the negro population in the South is not, however, identical with the Indian problem in Mexico. The Indians, who constitute about one-half of the inhabitants of Mexico, had attained a higher grade of cultivation when they fell under the dominion of the Europeans than the negroes had reached when they were first introduced into the United States. The social structure which was overthrown by the Spaniards was nearer civilization, as represented by the European nations, than the society from which the negroes were transferred to the British Colonies. But this advantage of the Indians had been offset by the later circumstances of the

negroes, which have imposed upon them wants entirely beyond the experience of the Indians. The negro's wants are essentially those of the society into which he has been introduced ; and the fact of the existence of these wants, and of the necessity of labor for their satisfaction, is the ground of the superiority of the negro's position over that of the Indian, who has very few wants and, in the products of the tropics, abundant means for their satisfaction. The lack of conspicuous lines of class distinction in the United States permits the negro to take his standard of life from his white fellow-citizens ; but the rigid caste-like organization of Mexican society prevents the idea from arising in the Indian's mind, that he should live in accordance with the standard of any other than the class to which he belongs. Each generation has been satisfied to accept the standard of its preceding generation, and thus without increasing wants there has been no increase of efforts, and consequently no progress ; for wants and increasing wants constitute the main force by which a class or a nation is induced to advance. The condition of primary importance, therefore, for the elevation and progress of the Indians of Mexico is that they should be brought into such relations with other classes as will cause them to feel the necessity of accepting a higher standard of living, with the multitude of new wants which this involves. This is essentially the position into which many of the negroes of the United States have been brought by contact with the people of European descent. And that the Mexican Indians, under favorable circumstances, may not only rise to the position of honest and industrious members of society, but even display talents of the highest order, may be seen from the social history of Mexico and from illustrious examples. The great man of the Republic, the late President Juarez, was an Indian without foreign taint. More than any other of his countrymen of whatever descent, he was endowed with the prophetic vision of a great statesman. But whatever may be the future of the Mexican Indians, at present they are living on a social plane far lower than that which the laws presume as becoming

a citizen of a republic. We are, therefore, obliged to think of the complex political activity of a civilized state going on in a nation, where the bulk of the population lacks the enlightenment necessary to an understanding of this activity and of the institutions through which it is expressed.

















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